Portland RO Director Stanley Speaks Honored for 42-Year Career in Public Service

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WASHINGTON – Bureau of Indian Affairs Regional Director Stanley M. Speaks was one of nine BIA employees recognized by Interior Secretary Gale Norton at the Department's 61st Honor Awards Convocation on September 4, 2002. The event, last held in October 2000, honored the achievement, valor, excellence and merit of Interior employees.

Mr. Speaks, a member of the Chickasaw Nation and director of the BIA's Northwest Regional Office in Portland, Ore., received the Distinguished Service Award, the highest honorary recognition that an employee can receive within Interior, in recognition of his outstanding contributions to the Department and to the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). "Stan Speaks is an example of what service to tribes and Indian people is all about," said Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs Neal A. McCaleb. "His dignity and sense of responsibility for Indian people are reflected in the quality of his work."

"It is a real honor to receive this award," Mr. Speaks said. "I enjoy working with Tribes and seeing their progress in economic development, protecting treaty rights and strengthening tribal government. My philosophy has been to take issues and find solutions to resolve them."

Mr. Speaks was cited for his work with the Joint Tribal/DOI Task Force for the Reorganization of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (1991-1994), as well as with other BIA, Departmental, Federal and State task forces, boards and committees, including the Regional Interagency Executive Committee to the Northwest Forest Plan on which he has served since its inception. Mr. Speaks was also recognized for innovative initiatives and administrative and program improvements he has made during his tenure as regional director, and for his work with Federal, State and Tribal leaders on a wide variety of environmental, infrastructure, natural resources enhancement and other efforts to improve the Northwest Region. In one example, he was instrumental in bringing together the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation in Oregon and Portland General Electric to sign an agreement to co-manage the Pelton Dam hydroelectric plant located on the reservation.

Mr. Speaks began his public service career 42 years ago as a teacher at Intermountain Indian School, a now-closed BIA boarding school in Utah. He went on to serve first as superintendent of the BIA Agency and then as Area Office director in Anadarko, Okla. He went on to become director of the BIA's Portland Area (now Northwest Regional) Office where he has served for 20 years. During the mid-1980s, Mr. Speaks undertook assignments in the BIA's Central Office in Washington, D.C., including twice serving as interim director of the Office of Indian Education Programs (OIEP). He also served as acting Deputy Commissioner of the BIA in 1988 and from 1990 to 1991.

Eight other BIA employees also were recognized, one posthumously, for their dedication to duty and the quality of their work.

BIA Law Enforcement Officer Creighton T. Spencer was honored along with other Interior employees who have died in the line of duty since the October 2000 Convocation. Officer Spencer died on March 25, 2001 while responding to a call for assistance. On May 9, 2002, his name was added to the Indian Country Law Enforcement Officer's Memorial at the BIA Indian Police Academy in Artesia, N.M.

The Department presented its second highest honorary recognition, the Meritorious Service Award, to seven BIA employees: Earl J. Azure, Tribal Government Officer, Great Plains Regional Office, Aberdeen S.D.; Carmen N. Jacobs, Administrative Manager, Great Plains Regional Office; Cora L. Jones, Regional Director, Great Plains Regional Office; Lawrence H. Morrin, Regional Director, Midwest Regional Office, Ft. Snelling, Minn.; Wayne Nordwall, Regional Director, Western Regional Office, Phoenix, Ariz.; Loretta B. Webster, Equal Employment Manager, Great Plains Regional Office and JoAnn N. Young, Superintendent, Rosebud Agency, Rosebud, S.D.

"The BIA is truly honored to have so many of its employees recognized by the Department," said Assistant Secretary McCaleb. "I want to commend each award recipient for a job well done, and acknowledge our entire BIA staff for their dedication to providing good service to Indian Country."

The Meritorious Service Award is presented to Interior employees for an important contribution to science or management, a notable career, superior service in administration or in the execution of duties, or initiative in devising new and improved work methods and practices.

Note to Editors: *A photo of Stanley Speaks may be viewed via the Interior Department's web site at www.doi.gov.*